

REMARKS

This responds to the Office Action mailed on November 17, 2006. By this office action, claims 2 – 7, 11-16 and 18-22 were amended and claims 1, 8-10, 17 and 23-28 were canceled. No claims have been added. As a result, claims 2-7, 11-16, 18-22 and 29 are now pending in this application. Reconsideration of this application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is requested. An early allowance is also requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

In the Office Action of November 17, 2006 claim 10 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 29 was written in a form to overcome the objection to claim 10, and, as indicted by the Examiner, has been allowed.

All the claims that remain in this case depend from claim 29 either directly or indirectly. Accordingly, all the remaining claims 2-7, 11-16, 18-22 and 29 are now in allowable form and the various rejections are overcome.

§102 Rejection of the Claims

A. Rejection: Claims 1-3, 6-9, 11-17 and 20-28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) for anticipation by Blotsky (U.S. Patent No. 3,126,881).

B. Response: Claims 1, 8, 9, 17 and 23-28 have been canceled by this amendment thereby obviating the Examiner's rejection of this claim under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Blotsky (U.S. Patent No. 3,126,881).

Claims 2, 3, 6, 7, 11-16 and 20-22 have been amended to an allowable form, as explained above. As a result, the rejection of claim 1 under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by Blotsky (U.S. Patent No. 3,126,881) is now overcome.

§103 Rejection of the Claims

A. Rejection: Claims 4, 18, 19 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Blotsky (U.S. Patent No. 3,126,881) in view of Stewart et al. (U.S. Patent No. 3,209,743).

B. Response: Claims 4, 18, 19 and 22 have been amended to an allowable form, as explained above. As a result, the rejection of claims 4, 18, 19 and 22 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Blotsky (U.S. Patent No. 3,126,881) in view of Stewart et al. (U.S. Patent No. 3,209,743) is now overcome.

C. Rejection: Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Blotsky (U.S. Patent No. 3,126,881) in view of Mendive et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,582,117).

D. Response: Claim 5 has been amended to an allowable form, as explained above. As a result, the rejection of claim 5 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Blotsky (U.S. Patent No. 3,126,881) in view of Mendive et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,582,117) is now overcome.

Reservation of Rights

In the interest of clarity and brevity, Applicant may not have addressed every assertion made in the Office Action. Applicant's silence regarding any such assertion does not constitute any admission or acquiescence. Applicant reserves all rights not exercised in connection with this response, such as the right to challenge or rebut any tacit or explicit characterization of any reference or of any of the present claims, the right to challenge or rebut any asserted factual or legal basis of any of the rejections, the right to swear behind any cited reference such as provided under 37 C.F.R. § 1.131 or otherwise, or the right to assert co-ownership of any cited reference. Applicant does not admit that any of the cited references or any other references of record are relevant to the present claims, or that they constitute prior art. To the extent that any rejection or assertion is based upon the Examiner's personal knowledge, rather than any objective evidence of record as manifested by a cited prior art reference, Applicant timely objects to such reliance on Official Notice, and reserves all rights to request that the Examiner provide a reference or affidavit in support of such assertion, as required by MPEP § 2144.03. Applicant reserves all rights to pursue any cancelled claims in a subsequent patent application claiming the benefit of priority of the present patent application, and to request rejoinder of any withdrawn claim, as required by MPEP § 821.04.

Applicant also reserves the right to reintroduce canceled claims or reintroduce claims in the form prior to this amendment in a future application.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance, and notification to that effect is earnestly requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone Applicant's attorney at (612) 373-6977 to facilitate prosecution of this application.

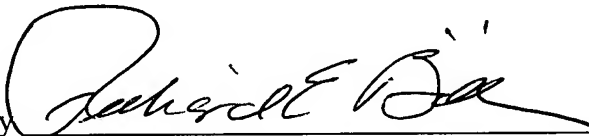
If necessary, please charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-0743.

Respectfully submitted,
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5/17/07

By



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CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR 1.8: The undersigned hereby certifies that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail, in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner of Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on this 17th day of May 2007.
PATRICIA A. HULTMAN

Name

Signature

